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Report of the Secretary-General on the International Year of Water Cooperation

Summary

The present report provides an overview of the origin, purpose and impact of the activities of the International Year of Water Cooperation, 2013, called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/154, in order to increase and improve water cooperation worldwide in the face of growing pressure on water resources and impacts on societies and nature. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was appointed by UN-Water to coordinate its preparations, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and with the support of the UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development and the UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication. UNESCO has produced this report on behalf of UN-Water, in consultation with all UN-Water members and partners.

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I. Introduction

1. Water is vital for life and development but water resources on the planet are limited. In all settings water is being shared, and water issues cross multiple physical, political and jurisdictional boundaries. By its very nature, water is a cross-cutting issue which demands attention at all levels and across sectors and involves multiple stakeholders, and often with conflicting and competing needs. It is only through water cooperation that humanity will succeed in the future to manage our finite and fragile water resources, which are under increasing pressure from the activities of a growing world population of over 7 billion people. Pressure on water resources is escalating from use by agriculture and industry, from pollution and urbanization, and from global anthropogenic changes.

2. Water cooperation takes many forms, ranging from cooperation across boundaries to managing shared underground aquifers and river basins, scientific data exchange, financial and technical cooperation and the cooperation between women and men for gender-sensitive water governance. International cooperation is necessary to address a large number of management issues, such as water allocation decisions, upstream and downstream impacts of water pollution and water abstraction, infrastructure development, overexploitation, and financing of water management. In short, water cooperation refers to the peaceful management and use of freshwater resources at the local, national, regional and international levels among various players and sectors, as well as between generations. The concept of water cooperation entails working together towards a common goal, in a way that is mutually beneficial, in a spirit of solidarity. Developing water cooperation involves an interdisciplinary approach integrating cultural, educational and scientific factors and covering religious, ethical, gender, social, political, legal, institutional and economic dimensions. Water cooperation is a vehicle for building peace and a foundation for sustainable development and gender equality.

3. In December 2010, the General Assembly declared 2013 as the United Nations International Year of Water Cooperation in its resolution 65/154, following the proposal submitted by a group of Member States, initiated by Tajikistan. The 31 members of UN-Water appointed the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to lead preparations for both the 2013 International Year and the World Water Day in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, and with the support of the UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development and the UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication. The campaigns for the International Year of Water Cooperation and the World Water Day jointly formed the Water Cooperation 2013 campaign.

4. Four key messages and five strategic objectives structured the Water Cooperation 2013 campaign (see box 1 and annex 1).

Box 1
International Year of Water Cooperation key messages and objectives

The key messages of the International Year of Water Cooperation

Water cooperation builds peace

Water cooperation creates tangible economic benefits

Water cooperation is key to socioeconomic development, poverty eradication, social equity, gender equality and environmental sustainability

Water cooperation is crucial to preserve water resources, ensure their sustainability and protect the environment

The five strategic objectives of the International Year of Water Cooperation

1. Raise awareness of the importance, the benefits and the challenges of cooperation on water-related issues.
2. Enhance knowledge and build capacity for water cooperation.
3. Spark concrete and innovative action towards water cooperation.
4. Foster partnerships, dialogue and cooperation around water as top priorities, also beyond 2013.
5. Strengthen international cooperation among institutions, users, social and economic sectors and others in order to reach a consensus on Sustainable Development Goals for the post-2015 era which will effectively address our future water needs.

II. Impact of the International Year of Water Cooperation and World Water Day campaign

5. In order to fulfil the water cooperation campaign's objectives and goals, UN-Water members and partners, and other contributors to the campaign, encouraged a diverse global public to participate in activities related to the observance of the Year. The audience included, but was not limited to: youth/children, adult public, economic sectors, indigenous and local communities, women's groups, civil society, Governments and decision makers, basin organizations, international organizations, international funding agencies and the media. The International Year of Water Cooperation and the World Water Day not only addressed this target audience but also sparked action among these groups. Some of these actors were not involved directly but rather indirectly, e.g., through national or local governments, international organizations or civil society. Not all modes of intervention were targeted at the same groups, nor were all objectives directed to the same extent at all audiences.

6. Information on campaign impacts through events and contributions were collected in the International Year of Water Cooperation website database of events (982 entries) and, more detailed, through a survey[1] developed by UNESCO (311 entries). The latter aimed at encouraging contributors to the International Year and World Water Day to share their experiences and at summarizing outcomes. While remaining small in scale owing to the limited number of returns, the survey delivered valuable indications of the campaign's impact, which are used in this report, with full recognition of its limitations.

7. For example, the total number of people reported as having been directly involved or impacted by activities related to the International Year is 548,409 (out of 199 contributions reporting on the question). This number is based on the subset of activities that were reported to the UNESCO survey conducted from December 2013 to March 2014. However, based on the 982 registered events (website of the International Year) and on a survey of activities reported on websites, it can be pointed out that the vast majority of contributions are unreported. Assuming a reporting rate of 2 per cent, it can be conjectured that the real total number of people directly involved or impacted by the year is well over 25 million. For instance, just one unreported activity conducted by a university in Spain involved over 150,000 people, and the vast majority of television programmes associated with the Year, are equally unaccounted for. These examples illustrate the difficulties in providing accurate data on the total number of contributions and people involved in the Year, and the reported subset must be interpreted as a gross underestimation of the real impact of the International Year.

8. With regard to the objectives of the International Year, contributors frequently responded that they had supported several objectives and goals, but only a part of the reported contributions (199 out of 311, see above) submitted information about the estimated number of persons reached (both directly (through personal attendance/participation) and indirectly (through printed publications), websites, CD and DVD sales), which can therefore be assumed to be significantly higher. The numbers of events and of persons reached through them are not proportional. Thus, 78 per cent of the reported events (or 243 of them) contributed to raising awareness on the importance, benefits and challenges of water cooperation, accounting for 547,391 persons. A total of 49 per cent (or 151 events) enhanced knowledge and developed capacity for water cooperation, involving 457,631 people; 39 per cent (or 121) fostered partnerships, dialogue and cooperation around water as a top priority, during and beyond 2013, reaching 368,165 persons; 28 per cent (or 87) sparked concrete and innovative action towards water cooperation, involving 399,164 persons; and finally, according to the survey only 24 per cent of the contributions (76 events) served to strengthen international cooperation among institutions, users, social and economic sectors and others.

9. The nature of the campaign, which extensively relied on awareness-raising tools, events and media to reach out and create snowball effects, influenced the capacity to measure the impact per objective. Impacts related to objectives 2 (*Enhance knowledge*

[1] The survey's questionnaire was sent to all known contributors to the International Year of Water Cooperation and World Water Day (based on UN-Water's register of events and the UNESCO database of International Year of Water Cooperation contacts: more than 2,000 addresses) and advertised on relevant web pages. The questionnaire in English, French and Spanish contained 33 questions.

and build capacity for water cooperation), 3 (*Spark concrete and innovative action towards water cooperation)* and 4 (*Foster partnerships, dialogue and cooperation around water as top priorities, also beyond 2013*) in particular were impossible to quantify in the absence of benchmarks, performance indicators and expected results fixed a priori. In order to provide an overview of impacts otherwise difficult to measure, reporting on the Year's official milestone events will serve to exemplify major contributions with multiple impacts.

1. Raising awareness

10. In order to assess, explain and address the challenges and barriers to water cooperation, UN-Water developed a visual identity and communication strategy for the Water Cooperation 2013 campaign, reflected in website design, publications, various campaign materials and the logo, for widest possible dissemination. The combined logo of the International Year of Water Cooperation and World Water Day integrated cultural expressions in the form of traditional local patterns and designs from many countries, symbolizing diversity in complementariness. Each logo was available for download. In addition to the initial version, volunteers around the world translated the logo into more than 60 languages. Thanks to a logo builder (developed with the suppor: of the UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development) users created uncounted variants.

11. The campaign website www.watercooperation2013.org was hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The website distributed a newsfeed and newsletters throughout the International Year, linked to interactive tools, publications and events. UN-Water partners and members provided content and materials, such as the International Year brochure in 6 languages and the Advocacy guide, 3 infographics and 10 factsheets. The site comprised a register and world map of events, contacts and links to the social media campaign tools of the International Year. It also showcased flyers, posters, t-shirt templates, educational comics, games, success stories, events around the world, a list of partners and databases of inputs. Highly successful in attracting a global public, the site drew 378,901 visitors, with well over 1 million cumulated page views in 2013.

12. The campaign also triggered a significant press echo. Throughout 2013, press articles and audiovisual media took up issues related to the International Year. A total of 6,374 articles in 17 languages mentioned the International Year and/or the World Water Day 2013 in paper and online media worldwide, of which 3,499 were in Europe and North America, 1,085 in Latin America, 1,271 in Asia and the Pacific, 199 in Africa and 320 in the Arab States (tool: meltwater). In the first place, organizers learned about the International Year through television, followed by the International Year Facebook page, the press, colleagues and partners, other social networks and the International Year website.

2. Knowledge building and capacity-development

13. Through providing educational material and access to relevant information and with an array of conferences and events organized worldwide, the Water Cooperation campaign facilitated the exchange of expertise and the sharing of scientific data. UN-Water members and partners have produced publications, which completed and sometimes expanded other campaign materials. Numerous

workshops and materials helped train men and women in water cooperation skills and fostered knowledge exchange.

14. Publications designed to collect and share knowledge to improve water cooperation also beyond 2013 were made available by several agencies, as hardcopies and online (see the International Year resources webpage).[2] Many documents were also disseminated through events. The following are examples:

- *World of Science* special issue Vol. 11, No. 1 (UNESCO, 2013)
- Water: catalyst for Cooperation (Global Water Partnership, 2013)
- Capacity Development for Water Cooperation, UNW-DPC Capacity Pool Issue No. 16 (UNW-DPC 2013)
- Monograph on Water cooperation (UNW-DPAC, 2013)
- *Free Flow: Reaching water security through cooperation* (joint publication UNESCO/Tudor Rose, October 2013)
- Poster — The Water Convention: 20 years of successful water cooperation
- Poster (in 23 languages), the Water Cycle poster and quiz in cooperation with the United States Geological Survey; 7 languages), postcards, calendar, logo kits and banners for print

15. The campaign also incited and helped many contributors to organize events and create cooperation around water-related issues at all levels, creating a movement of "learning-by-doing" throughout the Year (see sect. III of the present report).

3. Sparking innovative actions

16. One important innovation realized throughout the International Year concerned the systematic involvement of youth representatives, women and men, in the Milestone and many other events, at a level where their positions could be shared with the entire audience and were reflected in outcome documents and recommendations. This is expected to have a lasting impact on water cooperation worldwide.

17. During calendar 2013 the international business community also made strides in the area of water cooperation, especially through initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact's Chief Executive Officer Water Mandate, which encompasses more than 100 large corporations with public commitments to "water stewardship". In March, for example, the Chief Executive Officer Water Mandate convened an international event in Mumbai, which focused on the post-2015 agenda and how companies can better coordinate activities with civil society, Governments, United Nations agencies, and other stakeholders. Related, the CEO Water Mandate's Water Action Hub — the world's first online partnership project platform — attracted ever-growing interest, ending the year with almost 300 collaborative projects posted in watersheds around the world.

18. In the context of the International Year, new dynamics developed within existing processes. For example, the concerted efforts of many actors led in recent years to a steep increase in engagements towards the 1997 Water Convention. It will

[2] http://www.unwater.org/water-cooperation-2013/get-involved/other-resources/en/.

enter into force in August 2014, since in May 2014, Viet Nam the 35th country committed to the convention. In 2013, the accessions of four Member States were registered, the strongest count since 1997, on par with the four accessions in 2012 (when a ratification was also registered). Overall, since the General Assembly adopted its resolution 65/154 on the International Year, 16 countries legally bound themselves to the obligations of the Convention.[3] Compliance with international law constitutes a key tool for water cooperation: in particular human rights law and multilateral environmental agreements can be the foundation for a coordinated and coherent approach to water cooperation.

4. Partnerships, dialogue and cooperation

19. In addition to United Nations entities and the Member States involved in aforementioned processes, the campaign involved other thematic and/or regional organizations and processes. They included, among others, the Convention on Biodiversity, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the ratification process of the 1997 Watercourse Convention, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Through coordination with UN-Water and, inter alia, its network of Field Offices, UNESCO and its partners have linked IYWC, for example, to the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for Sub-Saharan Africa, with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for the Arab Countries and Western Asia; the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA); and the International Labour Organization (ILO) for the MDG-Joint Programme in Nicaragua, Panama and Paraguay.

20. Synergies between existing initiatives and processes appeared throughout the International Year and beyond. For example, several 2013 World Day campaigns were dedicated to Water Cooperation, such as World Wetlands Day (Ramsar Convention), the International Day of Biological Diversity, World Tourism Day and World Science Day.

21. Overall, the importance of the development of partnerships across sectors and regions has been a leitmotiv throughout the Year and is likely to durably modify the international water community in striving to ensure sustainable water for all.

5. The international development agenda and the International Year of Water Cooperation

22. The IYWC must be seen in the frame of the international development agenda of the United Nations: the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development have advocated since 1992 "cooperation among States, key sectors of societies and people" (A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I)) to fulfil the objectives of Agenda 21 and its chapter 18 dedicated to water; the decision to celebrate World Water Day since 1993; the water-related targets (7.c) of the Millennium Development Goals and the international recognition of the cross-cutting, crucial importance of water and sanitation for all issues covered by the Millennium Development Goals. All of these measures reflect the necessity to strengthen cooperation on water issues at all

[3] See: http://www.internationalwaterlaw.org/documents/intldocs/watercourse_status.html.

levels, from the local to the national, regional and international, involving all stakeholders.

23. In line with the evolution of the international water agenda, the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", 2005-2015 was proclaimed in General Assembly resolution 58/217 to aim at "the furtherance of cooperation at all levels, in order to help to achieve internationally agreed water-related goals contained in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation". In its resolution on the right to access to safe drinking water and sanitation, the Human Rights Council stressed the important role of international cooperation for achieving the relevant Millennium Development Goals (resolutions 64/292 and 68/157).

24. In June 2012, at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the Heads of State and Governments and high-level representatives recognized in the outcome document (General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex) The Future We Want "that water is at the core of sustainable development" and reaffirmed the water-related commitments made in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Declaration and regarding the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation. In this perspective, The Future We Want furthermore underlined the need to address a large array of water issues, including extreme events, pollution and wastewater treatment and recalled "the need for international assistance and cooperation".

25. UN-Water, Member States and other stakeholders organized celebrations and major events on the International Year, considered to be milestones of the Year, marking progress and guiding beyond 2013, in line with International Year Objective 5, Strengthen international cooperation among institutions, users, social and economic sectors and others in order to reach a consensus on Sustainable Development Goals for the post-2015 era which will effectively address our future water needs. The events also supported the International Year objectives across the board and involved all relevant areas, including but not limited to education, culture, gender, the sciences, conflict prevention and resolution, as well as ethics. Throughout all the events, the organizers and participants contributed to concretizing the proposal for a dedicated Sustainable Development Goal on water.

UN-Water International Annual Zaragoza Conference "Preparing for the 2013 International Year. Water Cooperation: Making it Happen", January 2013 (Europe)

26. UNW-DPAC organized this Conference from 8 to 10 January 2013, in Zaragoza, Spain. The conference brought together United Nations experts, participants from case studies in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Ethiopia, Guatemala, India, Kenya, Madagascar, Peru and Spain and key professionals from all around the world. This constituted the first major event during the period of the International Year. Case studies presented in Zaragoza were used subsequently in the campaign, e.g., in the International Year brochure. The conference concluded that while political will, legal frameworks, accountability and institutional structures provide a solid foundation for water cooperation, achieving water cooperation is the result of a long-term process which requires time, patience and mutual trust.

Box 2

International Year of Water Cooperation contribution to preparing the post-2015 development agenda

An outline of the contribution of the International Year of Water Cooperation to the Global Thematic Consultation on Water in preparation of the post-2015 development agenda

The 'World We Want 2015' Global Thematic Consultation on Water, facilitated under the umbrella of UN-Water, co-led by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and co-hosted by Jordan, Liberia, Mozambique, the Netherlands and Switzerland has helped define the role of water in the post-2015 development agenda. The Post-2015 Global Thematic Consultation on Water reached out through online engagement and social media and offered diverse perspectives and fresh insights on the water-related challenges people face in improving their lives and those of their communities. Beyond the online platforms for discussion, the water consultation enabled interactive and engaging face-to-face dialogues in many countries.

To clarify and explore water's diverse role, and following the orientation given by the Rio+20 Conference, the Consultation married two complementary approaches and audiences. The general global consultation reached people broadly interested in water and encouraged them to share their views. More narrowly, three sub-consultations encouraged weekly in-depth discussions around the topics: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Water Resources Management (led by UNECE); and Wastewater Management and Water Quality (led by UN-Habitat and AquaFed).

The Global Thematic Consultations on Water were an important input to the intergovernmental process on sustainable development goals. It was widely recognized that water cooperation is a joint responsibility and can only be achieved through cooperation at the local, national, regional and global level and through partnerships with a multitude of stakeholders. Water cooperation is most critical to achieve our common goals and ensure a prosperous and sustainable future.

Main conclusions of the Global Thematic Consultation on Water were drawn at the Final High-level Meeting held in The Hague in conjunction with the World Water Day celebration on 22 March 2013, as part of the International Year of Water Cooperation.

In January 2014, UN-Water's 31 Members from the United Nations system and 36 international Partners provided consolidated technical advice from the United Nations system to Member States to prioritize water in the post-2015 development agenda. A broad goal would capture the fundamental importance of water for both humans and the environment. (cf: http://www.unwater.org/topics/water-in-the-post-2015-development-agenda/en/)

Launch Ceremony for the 2013 International Year of Water Cooperation, UNESCO, February 2013, Paris (Europe)

27. UNESCO organized the official launch of the International Year at UNESCO Headquarters on 11 February 2013 with over 170 participants and in the presence of the Chair of UN-Water and Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Director-General of UNESCO and high-level representatives of several Member States and of the European Union, UN-Water and other partner organizations. The International Year campaign slogan was announced officially during this event.

28. The selection of the International Year slogan was a participative process involving the general public from all over the world. A selection committee composed of the UN-Water Management Team, UNESCO, ECE, UNW-DPAC and civil society had selected 10 out of over 12,000 slogan proposals, received from about 5,000 people in 180 countries. In a final public online poll, 3,000 participants chose the slogan "Water, water everywhere, only if we share", by Ms. Megha Kumar, from India.

29. During the launch event, UNESCO organized a youth event with local and international schools and the World Youth Parliament on Water. Gathered at the Pavillon de l'eau of Paris, over 100 youth representatives from about 30 countries discussed the global water situation, including:

- Access to water
- Water cooperation for the Global Sustainable Development Agenda
- Disaster reduction
- Regional and national level cooperation
- Cooperation, education and capacity development
- Youth

They finalized a Youth Declaration on water cooperation, which highlighted, among other issues:

- The lack of strategic infrastructure and increase of pollution by human activities, including deforestation, industrial production, unsustainable consumption and uncontrolled waste, affecting the quality and quantity of freshwater
- The insufficient knowledge and capacities at all levels regarding the causes and consequences of global changes, including climate change
- The need to create a more cooperative environment for the management of transboundary waters

30. As a result, the youth took on "the responsibility to take concrete actions according to the need and reality of our specific water resources" (Youth Declaration). The presence of Youth representatives in many events across the world echoed this dynamic.

World Water Day, 22 March: The High-Level Forum

The Hague, Netherlands (Europe)

31. The official World Water Day event in The Hague was an opportunity for the exchange of good examples and best practices of water cooperation from a global perspective and various viewpoints, including politics, civil society, science and business. The World Water Day celebration also focused on the outcomes of the Post-2015 Global Thematic Consultation on Water. The World Day overall theme focused on water cooperation as a foundation for peace and sustainable development and comprised: (a) an opening plenary session, including keynote speeches to set the tone and highlight objectives; (b) a series of thematic sessions to identify approaches to water cooperation by different stakeholder groups and to produce as output a contribution to the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda; (c) a High-level Forum which recognized the World Day output and highlighted that "water is a prerequisite in the future development framework in order to attain vital economic, equity, employment, health, educational, agriculture/food and energy benefits and for maintaining ecosystem services and supporting resilience to climate change". A wide variety of stakeholders was present, counting 588 participants from UN-Water, member States, academia, non-governmental organizations, youth, indigenous and spiritual leaders, and the private sector.

32. The means used to communicate on the WWD included: web pages of UN-Water members and partners, cumulating on WWD over 173,000 visits and more than 176,000 page views; the dedicated web page of the Dutch Government; a press kit; a live webcast watched by over 8,000 people; the WWD programme folder; UNESCO Water e-Newsletter for the Day; WWD celebrations map; a social media campaign with photo and video galleries reaching over 220,000 people; the Water Couch video interview space. About 50 press representatives attended. Interviews were made during and ahead of World Water Day to raise awareness on water cooperation. WWD generated significant media coverage, including stories in international print and audiovisual media, focusing on water cooperation. During World Water Day, public, cultural and media events linked to the celebrations, took place in and outside the venue, e.g., a live concert by Maestro Tan Dun, designated UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, water sounds, theatre performances, dedicated documentary and art work. "Walks for Water", highlighting the campaign's "kid power" were organized around World Water Day, in The Netherlands and worldwide.

33. In parallel to the UN-Water celebration of World Water Day in The Hague and pursuant to resolution 67/204 on the International Year implementation, a High-level interactive Dialogue of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly was held in New York to mark the International Year and the twentieth anniversary of the proclamation of World Water Day. It was connected to the celebrations in The Hague with a video link during the High-level Forum.

34. About 730 events reported on the official website for the Water Cooperation 2013 Campaign, were organized by a variety of actors (e.g., schools, non-governmental organizations, international non-governmental organizations, local and governmental authorities, United Nations offices, etc.) around the world. A more detailed analysis of the registered events can be found in sections III and IV of this report.

High-Level International Conference on Water Cooperation

Dushanbe, Tajikistan, 20-21 August (Asia)

35. The offer by the Government of Tajikistan to organize this conference had been welcomed by the General Assembly in resolution 67/204 as part of the implementation of the International Year. The event reflected the strong engagement of Tajikistan in the organization of the Year, the proposal for which it had initiated. This conference brought together representatives of governments, international and regional organizations and civil society. It pursued the deliberations of the High-level Dialogue in New York and the High-level Forum in The Hague on World Water Day, as well as other international and regional events on water cooperation. During plenary sessions, High-Level Panels and Special Focus Events participants put forward proposals summarized in the Dushanbe Framework for Action.[4]

36. The Declaration of the High-level Conference on Water Cooperation in Dushanbe promotes action at all levels to advance cooperation, recommending, inter alia:

- Cooperative development and management of transboundary water resources at the basin level
- Stronger dialogue at the local, national and regional levels to promote the cooperative development and management of water across boundaries and sectors for the benefit of all stakeholders, in accordance with the norms of international law
- To take into account the importance of indigenous knowledge and of all stakeholders including women and children as leaders of change
- That issues of water resources, drinking water and sanitation, and wastewater be given due consideration in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda

Stockholm World Water Week: Water Cooperation — Building partnerships

Stockholm, Sweden, 1-5 September (Europe)

37. The annual event in Stockholm, organized by the Stockholm International Water Institute, was coordinated in 2013 with UN-Water, reflecting the International Year of Water Cooperation. Over 270 organizations organized more than 100 events during the Stockholm World Water Week, covering a wide range of key areas of water cooperation, in relation to ecosystem health, private sector, information and communication technology to improve water governance, transboundary water cooperation, water, energy and food, climate change mitigation and adaptation, freshwater and oceans, groundwater governance, cooperation across and within jurisdictions and levels for good water governance, the bridging of the land-water divide, climate uncertainty and water and the "Science and Art of Water Cooperation".[5] Through a focus of Stockholm World Water Week on the Middle East and North Africa, ESCWA and BGR launched the Inventory of Shared Water Resources in Western Asia in order to support the shared water resources management in the Arab region. UN-Water members and partners were active

[4] www.hlicwc.org and http://www.womenforwater.org/docs/outcome_documents_eng.pdf.

[5] www.worldwaterweek.org/documents/WWW_PDF/2013/2013_WWW_Report_web.pdf.

partners of Stockholm World Water Week, participated in workshops, seminars, side events and special sessions, such as the water cooperation puzzle, the play "Theatre of the Absurd" on water security, cooperation and governance. The UN-Water pavilion presented International Year of Water Cooperation campaign material.

38. The overarching conclusions of the Stockholm World Water Week[6] pinpointed:

- Cooperation: For what and by whom?
- Water is not an isolated sector, but a connector
- Cooperation encounters roadblocks and bridges
- The water community still fails to successfully engage other sectors
- For cooperation to advance, its actors need to reach out of the water box/aquarium

39. Regarding the post-2015 agenda, the Stockholm World Water Week voiced the call for putting water at the centre of development at the horizon of 2030, recommending:

- Balancing competing demands for the same resources via integration and cooperation
- Although it is more difficult to work across sectors, integration and cooperation are necessary and inevitable
- The challenge is to develop suitable approaches and successfully implement them
- Coalitions, networks and partnerships need to find the way to reach out to non-conventional partners and look into new forms of collaboration to increase their impact and visibility

UNESCO High-Level and Strategic Meeting on Water Security and Cooperation

Nairobi, Kenya, 11-13 September 2013 (Africa)

40. The meeting was organized in collaboration with the Government of Kenya and promoted international cooperation on freshwater, including the planning of joint activities within the scope of the eighth phase of the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme. Among the more than 160 participants from about 50 countries attending the meeting were several Ministers of Water and Environment from African countries, high-level representatives and technical experts. The High-Level meeting highlighted the importance and challenges of scientific, regional and South-South and tripartite cooperation, advocated wise water governance and coordinated policy implementation.[7]

[6] www.worldwaterweek.org/documents/WWW_PDF/2013/2013-Overarching-Conclusions-web.pdf.

[7] The full report is available at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002259/225993e.pdf.

The Budapest World Water Summit

Budapest, Hungary, 8-11 October 2013 (Europe)

41. Organized by the Government of Hungary, the conference gathered High-level officials of States Members of United Nations agencies, including the Secretary-General and several heads of agencies, economic and social partners active in the water sector. It aimed to contribute to the elaboration of a possible water-related Systems Development Group and provide concrete guidance on the most pressing water issues — drinking water, sanitation, wastewater treatment, integrated water management, international water cooperation, innovative water technologies — with a view to defining the priorities of global development policy post-2015. The Summit also comprised an exhibition and numerous side events organized by UN-Water members and partners, such as the launch of the International Year of Water Cooperation publication "Free Flow".

42. The stakeholder groups present at the Summit, scientists, politicians, business leaders and youth representatives supported the Budapest Water Summit Statement "A Sustainable World is a Water Secure World".[8] Among its key recommendations was a dedicated and comprehensive SDG on Water and SMART(ER) (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound (Evaluated and Re-evaluated)) targets on universal access, integrated management, reduced pollution, increased resilience.

Special Programme on the International Year of Water Cooperation during the 37th General Conference of UNESCO

Paris, 14 November (Europe)

43. A special programme on the International Year of Water Cooperation was organized in the framework of the Science Commission of the UNESCO General Conference, in the presence of the Director-General. Brazil, Germany, Hungary, India, Kenya, Korea, Mexico, Tajikistan and the United Arab Emirates presented the events and activities undertaken during the campaign to representatives of the 195 UNESCO member States. The programme highlighted and provided an occasion to exchange on the contributions to the International Year at all levels: from individual participations like the International Year slogan to local events and international conferences and discussions on the possible role of water in the post-2015 development agenda.

International Year of Water Cooperation Closing Ceremony

5-6 December, Mexico City (Latin America)

44. UNESCO, on behalf of UN-Water, organized the closing ceremony with the support of the Government of Mexico through the National Water Commission (CONAGUA), which also published the memoirs of the event.[9] The ceremony included high-level panels on the global perspectives of water security and cooperation, on the milestone events and on United Nations activities that took place

[8] www.budapestwatersummit.hu/data/images/Budapest_Water_Summit_Statement_Final_11_October_2013.pdf.

[9] Available at https://en.unesco.org/news/now-available-memoirs-closing-ceremony-international-year-water-cooperation-2013.

during the Year. It brought together more than 400 participants from 60 countries, including ministers from several world regions, and over 200 institutions. Day 1 focused on cooperation as the key for peaceful water sharing, challenges and opportunities for water cooperation and its role for decision-making, science and education and the way forward towards "The Future we want". On day 2, round-table working groups discussed the key messages that emanated from the Year. The ceremony's closing session concluded with a spotlight on the way ahead, including a focus on water in the preparations for the post-2015 development agenda, stressing the need to pay particular attention to water in the forthcoming post-2015 agenda.

45. In the context of the closing ceremony, the youth event *Joven + Agua* gathered about 40 youth representatives, mainly from Latin America and the Caribbean and various organizations working on water issues, including the World Youth Parliament for Water. They introduced their activities and projects and reviewed activities organized during the Year.

46. The International Year of Water Cooperation closing ceremony recognized water cooperation as the tool of choice: to improve water governance and water management at all levels; to provide water and sanitation for all; and to improve the management of transboundary water systems, both surface and groundwater. It also viewed cooperation as an adequate means to foster education and develop capacities; that water cooperation must be based on sound scientific understanding of water issues; and that it must be inclusive of all the actors involved in using and managing water who can contribute to the processes required, extending to hitherto underrepresented actors, like indigenous groups. Furthermore, the participants called to finally achieve gender equality in the domain of water through cooperation.

III. The worldwide campaign events registered during the International Year of Water Cooperation

47. The partners of the Water Cooperation 2013 campaign registered 982 events through the world map and database of events on www.watercooperation2013.org. A statistical analysis, based on two types of criteria (*basic*: such as location and date, contact; *descriptive*: including types of events and organizers, scale, scope and audience) yielded the results summarized below. The analysis indicates general tendencies of events planned for the campaign, but not necessarily reported in detail.

1. Places of International Year of Water Cooperation events

48. Events for International Year of Water Cooperation and World Water Day were registered for 130 countries, as follows:

- 2 countries (India and the United States of America), between 97 and 101 events (together 20 per cent of all events)
- 4 countries (Brazil, Italy, Mexico and Spain) between 40 and 53 events
- 4 countries (Canada, France, the United Kingdom and Bulgaria) between 20 and 39 events
- 13 countries between 10 and 20

- 40 countries one event
- For the remaining 67 countries, between 1 and 10 events were reported

By geographic region, events were registered as follows:

- North America and Western Europe (ECE region), with 47 per cent of the total number of events, or 464
- Asia and Pacific (23 per cent of the total number of events, i.e., 221 events)
- Latin America and the Caribbean (20 per cent of the total number of events, i.e., 199 events)
- Arab States (6 per cent of the total number of events, i.e., 59 events)
- Sub-Saharan Africa (4 per cent of the total number of events, i.e., 37 events)

2. Event characterization

49. According to the analysis performed for the event's relation to the International Year of Water Cooperation, the World Water Day or to both, it was found that 54 per cent of the events were registered as related to the World Water Day, 21 per cent to International Year of Water Cooperation and 25 per cent to both.

50. Events were characterized as concerning three scales: (a) local, (b) national, and (c) international. The majority of the events (56 per cent) were local, followed by international (21 per cent) and national (18 per cent), and 5 per cent were not identified.

51. The analysis of the type of events shows that 19 per cent (186) of events were defined to be of a cultural nature, 115 events (12 per cent) took the form of an exhibition, 203 events (21 per cent) were seminars or conferences, 101 events (10 per cent) were workshops, 22 events (2 per cent) were organized as round tables, while 354 events (36 per cent) were classified as "Other". Here, the organizers of the events provided more than 100 different responses (making statistical analysis impractical), such as: water festival, youth discussion, educational activity, community event, symposium, online forum, YouTube video, walk for water, film screening, sport and cultural event, cleaning of water bodies, painting competition and others.

52. Regarding the Internet presence of events, more than 72 per cent of the events were promoted through or linked to a website: 712 events compared to 269 events without website support.

3. The target audiences

53. The analysis by target audience used the 11 predefined groups of people and combinations of groups, at which the events were aimed. In most cases the target audience was a combination of different target groups (210 unique and mixed responses).

54. The largest target group, the General public (229 events), corresponds to 23 per cent of the targeted audiences; followed by children (88 events), 9 per cent, and youth (74 events), 8 per cent. The combined audience of children, youth and general public (38 events) corresponds to 4 per cent of the total audience; the audiences in the category "Other" (32 events), corresponds to 3 per cent of the total.

The combined audience children, youth, general public and local communities (28 events), corresponds to 3 per cent of the total audience; the combination children and youth (27 events) corresponds to 3 per cent of the total audience.

55. Events aimed at academia represented 2 per cent (17 events) of the total events; those aimed at decision makers represented 1 per cent (13 events), at Government(s) 1 per cent (11 events). The private sector was targeted by 1 per cent (8 events); and those aimed at non-governmental organizations by 1 per cent of the total number of events. In the category "Other type of events", the 112 different answers were provided for the target audiences, which were divided in unique answers such as parents, media, municipalities, PhD students, political parties, schools and teachers, students, university community, employees, international organizations, families, etc., or a combination of these. In this specific category, the events targeting students (11 events) were the most numerous, and constituted 10 per cent of the group's total.

IV. Analysis of reported International Year of Water Cooperation events

56. It was an inherent goal of the Water Cooperation 2013 campaign to involve as large a public as possible. In order to complete and cross-check the information collected throughout the Year, a detailed survey developed by UN-Water members and partners (see para. 6) invited all the contacts registered throughout the Year to report on 33 points. More significant results from the analysis of the 311 reported contributions are summarized below.

1. Analysis by numbers of events

57. **Resources per contribution**: The median[10] amount per contribution (indicated cost of an event) was $3,000.

58. **Number of people impacted by the International Year** (i.e., depending on the type of contribution: number of CD/DVD sales, printed publications, number of website hits, number of participants, movie projections, etc.): An average of 2,778 people per event, were reached or impacted.

59. **Overall evaluation of the organization of the Year**: According to the rating obtained from 166 responses, the overall evaluation of the organization of the International Year of Water Cooperation was on average between "good" and "very good" (4.19; on a scale ranging from 1 "very bad" to 5 "very good").

60. **Countries of the implementing organizations**: India was the country with the most organizations implementing reported events during the Year (accounting for 10 per cent of total contributions), followed by Pakistan (5 per cent), France (4 per cent) and Colombia (4 per cent).

[10] The median (midpoint in the frequency distribution of values) was used, instead of mean, due to extreme values (i.e., one figure of $2,500,000).

Country of implementing organization	*Number of reported contributions*	*Percentage*
Colombia	12	4
Czech Republic	7	2
France	14	4
Germany	9	3
India	32	10
Italy	11	3.5
Pakistan	15	5
Romania	9	3
Spain	7	2.5
United Kingdom	8	3
United States of America	10	3
Total	**311**	**100**
Undefined	**48**	**15.5**

61. **Regional participation**: The highest number of events were registered in regions I (26 per cent) and IV (25 per cent).

Region	*Number of reported contributions*	*Percentage*[a]
I Western Europe and North America	81	26
II Eastern Europe and Central Asia	28	9
III Latin America and the Caribbean	20	6
IV Asia and the Pacific	79	25
V Africa and the Arab States	16	5
Total	**311**	**100**
Undefined	**87**	**28**

[a] For the purposes of the present report, only whole and 5 decimal points are shown in the data presented in percentages.

62. **Nature of participating organizations**: Participating organizations came mainly from civil society (22 per cent), the United Nations system (16 per cent), academia (11 per cent), and the private sector (9 per cent). In addition, 16 per cent of organizers classified themselves as "government entities", operating mostly at the

local (7 per cent) and national (6 per cent) levels.[11] UN-Water members (FAO, ILO, UNEP, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, ECA, ECLAC, UNDP, ECE, UNESCO and UNICEF) rank prominently among the organizers, with UNESCO accounting for over 30 contributions.

63. **Types of contributions**: The main types of contributions were events (58 per cent), with the next five non-exclusive options were as follows: workshops (18 per cent) seminars (16 per cent) exhibitions (15 per cent), conferences (14 per cent) and walks (11 per cent). Activities with children and youth (45 per cent) were also highly reported. A significant proportion of reported contributions consisted of websites (17 per cent), courses and training (14 per cent), publications (13 per cent) and field projects (13 per cent).

Types of contributions	*Number of reported contributions*	*Per cent*
Events (generic)	179	58
Activities with children and youth	141	45
Workshop	57	18
Website	54	17
Seminar	50	16
Exhibition	47	15
Conference	45	14
Courses/training	43	14
Publication	41	13
Field project	41	13
Movie/video	38	12
Walk	34	11
Contest	26	9
Festival	22	7
CD/DVD	19	6
Research project	19	6
Symposium	16	5

64. **Duration of reported field projects (including preparation)**: The tables below show the duration and type of reported field projects, which had a strong presence on both ends of the time spectrum: 17 short-term projects (less than 3 months) and 16 long-term projects (over one year) were reported. Out of a total of 41 reported field projects, more than half (27) were geared towards "information and awareness", while the rest (14) focused on "water and sanitation supply".

[11] The majority of survey participants (23%) selected the open text field option "Other" (listing in most cases, NGOs, museums or schools) which, if correctly assigned, would have resulted in an increase of the "civil society" percentage.

Duration of reported field project	*Number of reported contributions*	*Per cent of total contributions*
> 1 year	16	5
0 < 3 months	17	5
3 < 6 months	4	1
6 < 12 months	4	1.5

Type of reported field project	*Number of reported contributions*	*Per cent of total contributions*
Information and awareness	27	9
Water and sanitation supply	14	4

65. **Types of publications**: The main types of publications were articles and brochures (each accounting for 3 per cent of total reported contributions), while books and research reports were slightly less present, with 6 registered cases in each category.

Type of publication	*Number of reported contributions*	*Per cent of total contributions*
Article	11	3
Book	6	2
Brochure	10	3
Other	6	2
Research report	7	2

66. **Target groups**: The top five target groups were: (1) the private sector (78 per cent, 242), (2) women (76 per cent, 238), (3) government (73 per cent, 226), (4) NGOs (71 per cent, 220), and (5) experts (70 per cent, 219).

Target groups	*Number of reported contributions*	*Per cent*
Academia	205	66
Children	205	66
Youth	175	56
NGOs	220	71
Women	238	76
Decision makers	214	69
Experts	219	70
Government	226	73
Private sector	242	78
Local communities	203	65
General public	178	57

67. **How participating organizations learned about the IYWC**: In first place, organizers learned about the IYWC through television (98 per cent), followed by the

IYWC Facebook page (91 per cent), the press (85 per cent), colleagues and partners (85 per cent), other social networks (85 per cent) and the IYWC website (60 per cent).

2. Analysis by number of people involved or impacted

68. **Overall number of people involved/impacted:**[12] The total reported number of people involved or impacted by the Year was 548,409 (impacted both directly through personal attendance/participation, and indirectly, reached by printed publications, etc.).

69. With the highest number of people impacted in Western Europe and North America, the overall number of people involved/impacted per region is as follows: Region I (Western Europe and North America) 183,943 people; region II (Eastern Europe and Central Asia) 46,305 people; region III (Latin America and the Caribbean) 142,340 people; region IV (Asia and the Pacific) 120,689 people; and region V (Africa and the Arab States) 2,600 people. The number of people specifically impacted/reached by publications is 459,036. Finally, seven countries reported the participation of over 10,000 individuals: Armenia, Austria, Bangladesh, Colombia, France, India and Japan.

70. Out of all the people "impacted" by the Year, 233,642 participated in events where there was a focus on gender issues (with a mean of 3,651 people per event). In this respect, respondents of the questionnaire answered "yes" to the question "Does your contribution include a focus on gender issues?" in 25 per cent of reported contributions. In addition, Asia and the Pacific (Region IV) is where most events reported a focus on gender issues (33.8 per cent of the total of contributions where there was a focus on gender), followed by: region I (25 per cent), region V (11.3 per cent), region II (6.3 per cent) and region III (5 per cent). Finally, in 76 per cent of reported contributions, women were a "target group" (238). It is important to note that in 76 per cent of reported contributions youth was a "target group", whereas in 56 per cent of cases, children were a "target group". To conclude, 19 per cent of the reported activities included a focus on issues related to Africa.

V. Conclusions

71. **The International Year of Water Cooperation and the World Water Day supported the creation of new water-related dynamics in the international development agenda. The numerous events worldwide and large numbers of people involved, as well as their diverse backgrounds, have demonstrated the great relevance of water cooperation as the global civilization is facing vital challenges. The Campaign has helped to increase knowledge about cooperation and to reinforce political will and existing legal frameworks, accountability and institutional structures that can provide a solid foundation for water cooperation. They must be further strengthened. While establishing water cooperation among all concerned can only be the result of a long-term process requiring time, patience and mutual trust, facts and figures highlighted above**

[12] Approximate number of people who participated (i.e., depending on contribution type: sales figures for CD/DVD, printed publication/website hits/number of participants to activities, event, movie projections or project).

show that the Year's campaign has clearly contributed a strong impetus for cooperative action at all levels.

72. With the importance of developing fruitful and sustainable partnerships across sectors and regions as a leitmotiv, the International Year of Water Cooperation's impact is likely to have durably modified the international water community in its striving to ensure sustainable water for all.

73. Another significant outcome: Youth took on the responsibility to take concrete actions according to the need and reality of specific water resources (Youth Declaration). The presence of Youth representatives in many events across the world warrants intergenerational cooperation and constitutes a game changer for water-related sustainable development.

74. The International Year of Water Cooperation made it clear that water cooperation is the tool of choice: to improve water governance and water management at all levels; to provide water and sanitation for all; and to improve the management of transboundary water systems, both surface and groundwater. Cooperation is also an adequate means to foster education and capacity development; it must be based on sound scientific understanding of water issues; and it must be inclusive of all the actors involved in using and managing water and who can contribute to the processes required, extending to hitherto underrepresented actors, like indigenous groups and the poor. Furthermore, the International Year of Water Cooperation reminded to finally achieve gender equality in the domain of water, both, by the means of and in cooperation.

List of the annexes available through the UN-Water website

I. Information on the preparatory phase of the United Nations 2013 International Year of Water Cooperation, key messages and objectives

II. Declaration of Youth

III. Background for analysing the Water Events register

IV. Contributions and contributing organizations to the International Year of Water Cooperation and World Water Day as recorded through the UNESCO/UN-Water survey, December 2013 to March 2014.

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Sixty-ninth session
Item 51 of the provisional agenda*
Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

The occupied Syrian Golan

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/84, in which the Secretary-General was requested to report to the Assembly at its sixty-ninth session on the implementation of the resolution.

* A/69/150.

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1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/84, in which the Assembly called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to comply with the relevant resolutions on the occupied Syrian Golan, in particular Security Council resolution 497 (1981), in which the Council decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan was null and void and without international legal effect, and demanded that Israel rescind forthwith its decision. The Assembly repeated its call upon Member States not to recognize any of the legislative or administrative measures and actions referred to in the resolution and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its sixty-ninth session on the implementation of resolution 68/84.

2. On 23 April 2014, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), on behalf of the Secretary-General, addressed a note verbale to the Government of Israel, in which Israel was asked to provide information on any steps it had taken or envisaged taking concerning the implementation of the relevant provisions of the aforementioned resolution. At the time of reporting, no reply had been received.

3. Also on 23 April, OHCHR, on behalf of the Secretary-General, sent a note verbale to the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic and all other permanent missions to the United Nations in Geneva, asking Member States to provide information on any steps they had taken or envisaged taking concerning the implementation of the relevant provisions of the resolution. In addition to the response from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic, replies were received from the Permanent Missions of Algeria, Colombia, Cuba and Slovakia to the United Nations in Geneva.

4. In its reply dated 6 June 2013, the Syrian Arab Republic mentioned that, since 1967, the international community had rejected the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan, as reflected in several United Nations resolutions, most recently in General Assembly resolution 68/17. The Syrian Arab Republic recalled that after 47 years of occupation, Israel continued its practices with impunity and with disregard for international law and United Nations resolutions, despite repeated international calls to end the occupation and to halt its daily repressive practices in the occupied Syrian Golan.

5. The Syrian Arab Republic affirmed that the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East would require the implementation of United Nations resolutions aimed at ending the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan and other Arab territories. The Syrian Arab Republic stated that President Bashar al-Assad had shown, on several occasions, his willingness to resume peace negotiations on the same basis upon which the Madrid peace process was started in 1991. It further noted that in international forums, the Syrian Arab Republic had declared its full commitment to relevant international resolutions and had called for their implementation, in particular Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 497 (1981). The Syrian Arab Republic also called for the implementation of the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure the full withdrawal by Israel from all of the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967.

6. According to the Syrian Arab Republic, in addition to the occupation of the Syrian Golan, Israel persisted in its aggression and provocation by providing logistical support to what the Syrian Arab Republic referred to as "terrorists", and through military intervention in the Syrian Arab Republic, such as the attacks

against a school and a mosque in Al-Ahmadiyah village. The Syrian Arab Republic mentioned that providing support to those individuals was in flagrant violation of international law and the separation of forces agreement.

7. The Syrian Arab Republic condemned the Israeli settlement policy in the occupied Syrian Golan, noting that Israel continued to disregard the resolutions of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council on the matter, most recently Human Rights Council resolution 25/31. In that resolution, the Human Rights Council confirmed the illegality of the settlements and other Israeli activities in the occupied Syrian Golan, and reiterated its call on Israel to desist from changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan.

8. The Syrian Arab Republic condemned Israeli practices and conduct aimed at controlling and looting resources in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of Security Council resolution 497 (1981) and General Assembly resolution 68/235 on the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources. According to the Syrian Arab Republic, Israel has exploited the natural resources of the occupied Syrian Golan, and allowed settlers to exclusively use those resources, while depriving the Syrian population of their benefits. The Syrian Arab Republic also warned of the risks of the measures taken by Israel to explore for oil in the occupied Syrian Golan and referred to the decision of the Israeli Ministry of National Infrastructures, Energy and Water Resources to grant United States-based Genie Oil and Gas a licence to carry out such exploration, noting that it constituted a gross violation of international law and United Nations resolutions.

9. As in previous notes verbales, the Syrian Arab Republic reiterated its concerns regarding the extraction of water by Israel from Lake Masada, in 2010 to establish a farm for settlers, considering that the action constituted a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and that it had led to an economic and environmental disaster for the occupied Syrian Golan. Furthermore, the Syrian Arab Republic condemned the funding by the European Union of a survey aimed at promoting alternative tourism in the Israeli settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan.

10. The Syrian Arab Republic called upon Member States to refuse, in accordance with their obligations under international law, the importation of natural or manufactured products from the occupied territories and to remind Israel of its obligations under international law. In that context, the Syrian Arab Republic referred to reports on settlers exporting wine produced in the occupied territory to the European Union while illegally labelling it as an Israeli product.

11. The Syrian Arab Republic repeated its rejection of the decision by the Knesset on 22 November 2010 to organize a general referendum on the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Syrian Golan and East Jerusalem. According to the Syrian Arab Republic, the decision was not in compliance with Security Council resolution 497 (1981) and was a violation of international law, which stipulates that a territory should not be acquired by force.

12. The Syrian Arab Republic reiterated its request to the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the President of the Human Rights Council and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross

that they pressure Israel to ensure that Syrian prisoners detained in its jails were kept under more humane and healthier conditions, and to condemn inhumane conditions and the deprivation of visitation rights.

13. As in previous notes verbales, the Syrian Arab Republic called for international pressure on Israel to allow the Syrian population of the occupied Syrian Golan to visit their families in the Syrian Arab Republic through the Quneitra crossing. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that preventing such visits was in violation of the Geneva Conventions and customary international humanitarian law and led to the suffering of Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan.

14. The Syrian Arab Republic concluded by stating that reaching sustainable peace and stability in the Middle East would require measures to ensure the enforcement of all relevant international resolutions, including the Geneva Conventions, without discrimination or selectivity.

15. On 9 July 2014, the Permanent Mission of Slovakia to the United Nations in Geneva sent a note verbale announcing that, in accordance with resolution 68/84, it did not recognize any of the legislative or administrative measures and actions taken by Israel.

16. In it response dated 12 June 2014, the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations in Geneva reiterated the importance of efforts within the framework of the United Nations to end the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan. At the same time, Cuba urged the international community not to recognize any legislative or administration measures undertaken by Israel in line with resolution 68/84. Cuba reaffirmed that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel to change the legal status, physical characteristics, demographic composition and the institutional structure of the occupied Syrian Golan were null and without any legal validity. Cuba also indicated that the acquisition of territory was non-admissible by virtue of international law and that it was unacceptable for the Syrian Golan to remain under the military occupation of Israel.

17. Cuba called upon Israel to withdraw from all of the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967, in compliance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). It further stated that Israel should renounce its unrestrained attempts to take over the occupied Syrian Golan. In the view of Cuba, the foreign occupation, policies of expansion and aggression, racial discrimination, the establishment of settlements, the creation of fait accompli on the ground and the forcible annexation of territories were practices that violated international instruments and norms.

18. Moreover, Cuba considered that practices and conduct by Israel to control and usurp the resources of the occupied Syrian Golan violated Security Council resolution 497 (1981) and General Assembly resolution 68/235. Cuba further condemned the "brutal" practices in Israeli prisons and reiterated its serious concerns about the inhumane conditions to which Syrian detainees had been subjected, which had had a negative impact on their health and had put their lives in danger, in clear violation of international humanitarian law.

19. Cuba indicated that, in line with the Arab Peace Initiative and the Madrid peace process, and in conformity with relevant Security Council resolutions, the 120 members of the Non-Aligned Movement had expressed their unconditional support for and solidarity with the legitimate demand of the Syrian Arab Republic to

reinstate its full sovereignty over the occupied Syrian Golan. Cuba considered the ongoing occupation of the Syrian Golan and its de facto annexation by Israel to be an obstacle to achieving a just, comprehensive and durable peace in the region.

20. On 24 June 2014, the Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations in Geneva replied to the note verbale sent by OHCHR. Colombia stated that it viewed the situation in the Middle East as an integral issue and therefore advocated a structured and lasting solution to the situation in the region. Colombia viewed negotiation as the only means to achieve a lasting solution and highlighted that it was unacceptable to use force as a means to obtain territory. Colombia stressed its support for achieving lasting regional peace through consensus and dialogue.

21. On 3 July 2014, the Permanent Mission of Algeria to the United Nations in Geneva responded to the aforementioned note verbale. It stated that on several occasions Algeria had condemned the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan and had called for the resumption of Syrian sovereignty over the territory and respect for human rights in the region. According to Algeria, solving the issue of the occupied Syrian Golan was a prerequisite for a fair and comprehensive solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict as a whole.

22. Algeria condemned in the strongest terms possible the repressive practices of Israel against the Syrian population, and its practices to change the demographic composition of the occupied Syrian Golan through the establishment of settlements. Algeria expressed support for numerous resolutions adopted by the League of Arab States in which Israeli practices and gross violations of the human rights of the Syrian population in the occupied territory were condemned. According to Algeria those resolutions called upon the United Nations, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council to urge Israel, as the occupying Power, to respect the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; to protect the rights of the Syrian population in the occupied Syrian Golan; and to facilitate visits by members of that population to their families in the Syrian Arab Republic. The resolutions also called upon those entities to hold Israel responsible for the violations committed on a daily basis in the occupied territory.

23. In addition, Algeria stated that Israel should respect Security Council resolutions concerning the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly resolution 497 (1981), and urged the international community to request that Israel abolish its decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan.